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## REVIEWERS.

REVIEWERS serve more than one important end in literature: it is now but their subordinate function to censure bad and encourage good authors; their more engrossing aim is to give a scantling of a current literature, too copious to be studied in detail—in short, an available miniature of all that is worthy of attention in the fifteen or sixteen hundred books thrown every year amongst us. The quarterly works do this in a way of their own, selecting only a few of the principal books for notice, and endeavouring to make every paper a thing of independent merit, either by the way in which the subject is treated, or the new matter brought to bear upon it. In monthly periodicals, shorter articles and more of them, with less originality of treatment, is the order of the day; while the weekly ones aim at little beyond a summary of the principal books, illustrated copiously by extracts. It was not thus in old times. Critics were formerly a gang of writers animated fully as much by a wish to wreak out malevolent feelings, as to illuminate a simple public. Huët, bishop of Avranches, speaks of reviewers as, at the best, necessary evils. He calls criticism "an ignoble employment of the intellect, worthy only of a little mind—a task necessary, but mean: like that of the weeder whom I employ in freeing my garden from noxious plants, while I eat and store the fruit." The Rev. Francis Douce defined reviewers as "the very bane of learning, the perverters of knowledge;" and Barker, editor of the new Greek Thesaurus, designated them the "scavengers of literature." Voltaire's epithet is not much more savoury—*la canaille de la littérature*. He had, somehow, like our own Pope, got into the worst of terms with these dreaded ministers of literary justice. By way of a great effort of candour, they admitted the beautiful style of his History of Charles XII., but condemned it for its incredible statements—on which the king of Poland gave an attestation in these terms:—"M. de Voltaire has neither forgotten nor misplaced a single fact or circumstance; all is truth and properly arranged." When this author's *Prodigal Son* met with success on the stage, he wrote to a lady—"Had I been known to be the author, the piece would have been condemned. Men do not like to see the same person succeed in two kinds of writing. I made enemies enough by my *Œdipus* and *Henriade*." We are here reminded of an anecdote of a French wit, who, finding his reputation impeded by the hostility of the critics, resolved to adopt a little stratagem to assist him in gaining fame and money in spite of his enemies. He dressed himself in workmanlike attire, and repaired to a distant province, where he took lodgings at a farrier's shop, in which he did a little work every day at the forge and anvil. But the greater part of his time was secretly devoted to the composition of three large volumes of poetry and essays, which he published as the works of a Journeyman Blacksmith. The trick succeeded—all France was in amazement: the poems of this "child of nature," this "untutored genius," this "inspired son of Vulcan," as he was now called, were immediately praised by the critics, and were soon purchased by everybody. The harmless deceit filled the pockets of the poor poet, who laughed to see the critics writing incessant praises on an author whose every former effort they had made a point of abusing.

That the critics of the last century deserved in some degree the epithets which were occasionally bestowed upon them, we are little disposed to doubt, when we

recollect the ravings of the maniac Dennis, and the frantic truculence of Gilbert Stuart towards every man who had earned a better reputation than himself. Mr D'Israeli has presented an appalling view of this man's malignant proceedings as a critic, particularly with regard to worthy Dr Henry, author of a laborious history of Great Britain. Stuart had an Edinburgh Magazine, in which he endeavoured to demolish—this was his favourite phrase—all the authors he hated. Not content with this, he wished he could transport himself to London, to multiply the attack from the Monthly and Critical Reviews. Writing to a friend about a journey which poor Henry was making to the metropolis, with a view to the disposal of his book, he says, with a fury absolutely fiendish, "I wish sincerely that I could enter Holborn the same hour with him. He should have a repeated fire to combat with. I intreat that you may be so kind as to let him feel some of your thunder. I shall never forget the favour. If Whitaker is in London, he could give a blow. Paterson will give him a knock. Strike by all means. The wretch will tremble, grow pale, and return with a consciousness of his debility."

The days of such literary savagism are past; but there was a middle period, not yet far receded from our own times, when criticism was not unfrequently abused, though chiefly under the influence of that party-spirit which still forms a medium of distortion for so many other things. We are old enough to remember when every aspirant in letters was regularly shown up in the worst light of which he was susceptible, in the review professing opposite politics to his own; and this was a practice which the public seemed to look upon complacently, as if it had been consonant with the purest principles of morality, or part of a system of things which it was needless to think of improving. During the reign of this abuse, two noted cases of *mistake* occurred. In 1808, a young nobleman published a volume of poetry little above mediocrity, pleading as an excuse for all defects the designation on his title-page—"a minor." It was such a piece of harmless folly as young men are every day committing, and the book was positively not worthy of a single remark of any kind from the pen of a contemporary critic. But the Edinburgh Review saw and could not resist so glorious an opportunity of pillorying an aristocrat. It pounced upon the minor, and in four and a-half pages, very thoroughly satisfied the public that the book was, from beginning to end, "a dead flat." "We beg leave," says the critic, addressing the author, "seriously to assure him, that the mere rhyming of the final syllable, even when accompanied by the presence of a certain number of feet; nay, although (which does not always happen) those feet should scan regularly, and have all been counted regularly upon the fingers—is not the whole art of poetry. We would intreat him to believe, that a certain portion of liveliness, somewhat of fancy, is necessary to constitute a poem; and that a poem in the present day, to be read, must contain at least one thought, either in a little degree different from the ideas of former writers, or differently expressed. We put it to his candour, whether there is anything so deserving the name of poetry in verses like the following," &c. In conclusion—"But whatever judgment may be passed on the poems of this noble minor, it seems we must take them as we find them, and be content, for they are the last we shall ever have from him. He is, at best, he says, but an intruder into the groves of Parnassus. He never lived in a garret like thorough-bred poets; and 'though he once roved a careless mountaineer in the

Highlands of Scotland,' he has not of late enjoyed this advantage. Moreover, he expects no profit from his publication; and, whether it succeeds or not, 'it is highly improbable, from his situation and pursuits hereafter,' that he should again condescend to become an author. Therefore let us take what we get and be thankful. What right have we poor devils to be nice? We are well off to have got so much from a man of this lord's station, who does not live in a garret, but has the 'sway' of Newstead Abbey. Again, we say, let us be thankful; and, with honest Sancho, bid God bless the giver, nor look the gift horse in the mouth." How unlucky! the poet here proclaimed a hopeless young ninny, four years after published Childe Harold's Pilgrimage! In the other instance there was less difference between the critic's award and the ultimate judgment of the public; but there was far less ground for the unfavourable judgment. A young man, brought up in a laborious employment in London, had published a volume of poems, which had received some favourable notice in an opposition paper—a circumstance which had led to some intercourse between the poet and the editor of that print. Being thus stamped as a member of a set of obnoxious authors, he became a proper object for the wrath and scorn of William Gifford, who, in four pages of his review, dismissed him thus:—"If any one should be bold enough to purchase this 'poetic romance,' and so much more patient than ourselves as to get beyond the first book, and so much more fortunate as to find a meaning, we intreat him to make us acquainted with his success." The poet thus condemned was Keats, a true and original genius, if ever there was one, and whose poetry is slowly but steadily advancing in reputation. It was about the same time that the opposite organ commenced a paper on Wordsworth's Excursion, with the derisive words, "This will never do;" and soon after added, "We give him (the poet of the lakes) up as altogether incurable, and beyond the power of criticism;" this same Mr Wordsworth being now universally received as at the head of the living bards of his country. Shall we here venture, without incurring a charge of too much ill nature, to quote an opinion of the Quarterly Review itself, given forth probably in a moment of ultra candour a good many years ago:—"Our critics have been, and continue to be, the worst in Europe; the most shallow, the most contradictory, the most presumptuous!"

There is something, on the other hand, partly ludicrous and partly melancholy in the effect which the merciless criticisms of past times had upon the unfortunate race of authors. Even the illustrious Newton was of so sensitive a frame of mind, that Whiston, from friendly feeling, abstained from publishing his criticism on the philosopher's Chronology, lest it should have killed him. Such catastrophes are reported as having actually taken place. Hawkesworth, it is said, was the victim of a critical assassination; and the end of Bishop Stillingfleet was hastened by something similar. The case of poor Kirke White is well known. When only seventeen, he published a volume of poems, in hopes of procuring by its sale sufficient money to enable him to go to college. An unfavourable notice of them in the Monthly Review of February 1804, lacerated his feelings. He wrote a letter, couched in mild terms, to the reviewers, who contented themselves with merely replying, in their printed answers to correspondents, that they sympathised with his expostulations. How grievously their criticism depressed and haunted his mind, may

\* See an article, understood to be by Southey, on the English Poets, vol. xii., p. 61.

be conceived from his own admission. "This review," says he, "goes before me wherever I turn my steps, and is, I verily believe, an instrument in the hands of Satan to drive me to destruction." So unfair did that review appear to one of its readers, Southey, that, with all the generosity of a high mind, he addressed a letter to the young poet, encouraging him to persevere. A correspondence thus ensued between them; and when the spirit-wounded poet was removed to an untimely grave by consumption, it was Southey's friendly hand that gathered his scattered works and gave them to the world. Daunted by the formidable barrier of criticism, the poet despaired of climbing the hill of fame, and he schooled his soul into viewing the things of time through a less passionate medium. His thoughts were curbed and fixed on death, and the world's applause came too late. The article on Keats is generally understood to have been the remote cause of the early death of that young poet. On reading it, his feelings were so excited that he burst a blood-vessel, and this led to the consumption which carried him off at twenty-four, though not before he had written other poems even superior to the first. Moore tells us that the effect which the taunting critique of the Edinburgh Review had upon Byron "can only be conceived by those who, besides having an adequate notion of what most poets would feel under such an attack, can understand all that there was in his temper and disposition to make him feel it with tenfold more acuteness. A friend who found him in the first moments of excitement after reading the article, inquired anxiously whether he had just received a challenge? not knowing how else to account for the fierce defiance of his looks. It would indeed be difficult for sculptor or painter to imagine a subject of more fearful beauty than the fine countenance of the young poet must have exhibited in the collected energy of that crisis. His pride had been wounded to the quick, and his ambition humbled; but this feeling of humiliation lasted but for a moment. The very re-action of his spirit against aggression roused him to a full consciousness of his own powers; and the pain and the shame of the injury were forgotten in the proud certainty of revenge." Wrath was visible on the poet's forehead till he had relieved his mind in satirical rhyme: "after the first twenty lines," he said, "he felt himself considerably better." His responsive satire, which was published under the title of English Bards and Scotch Reviewers, soon silenced his enemies, for the talent visible in it could not be mistaken.

This brings us to remark upon the obviously bad policy—obvious to all but one party—of attempting to refute an unfavourable criticism. An author, replying to such things, except barely to vindicate himself on some point of fact, or of morality, is in a position not much less false than he would be if he were to undertake to trumpet his own merits; and the public never comes heartily to his side. Goldsmith found this when he resented the attacks of the London Review in a pamphlet which was completely disregarded. So did Hazlitt, on publishing a reply to the Quarterly, of which, as his friend Lamb remarked, fifteen copies were sold to answer the fifteen thousand of the Review. It was reserved for the cool national sagacity and dispassionateness of Scott to set the right fashion on the subject of a visitation of critical surgery. At the very first, says he, "I determined that, without shutting my ears to the voice of true criticism, I would pay no regard to that which assumes the form of satire. I therefore resolved to arm myself with the triple brass of Horace against all the roving warfare of satire, parody, and sarcasm; to laugh if the jest was a good one, or, if otherwise, to let it hum and buzz itself asleep. It is to the observance of these rules," he adds, "that, after a life of thirty years, engaged in literary labours of various kinds, I attribute my never having been entangled in any literary quarrel or controversy; and, which is a more pleasing result, that I have been distinguished by the personal friendship of my most approved contemporaries of all parties." In a letter to Crabbe, he says, "After all, if a faultless poem could be produced, I am satisfied it would tire the critics themselves, and annoy the whole reading world with the spleen. I have often thought it the most fortunate thing for bards, like you and me, to have an established profession and professional character, to render us independent of those men-midwives of literature, who are so taken up with the abortions they bring into the world, that they are scarcely able to bestow the proper care upon young and flourishing babes like ours."

Truculent critics are now as much beings of a former day, as are those remorseless ladies who kept their lovers sighing for years without vouchsafing so much as a smile. Criticism is not now a matter of sentiment as it once was; like many other things, which formerly were of that character, it has become very much a matter of business. The reviewer devotes himself to a useful function in the public service, exactly as the author himself does, and, though all may not be free from at least occasional visitings of a malicious or invidious spirit, they generally do their duty in a manner which a respectable public may approve of. The exceptions are not worthy of particular notice; yet they may be slightly adverted to. There is still, of course, such a thing as favouritism amongst periodical critics; a disposition

to say all that is sweet of certain authors, and even the productions of certain publishers, and to maintain a proper appearance of critical astuteness and dignity by speaking sharply and tauntingly of others towards whom they feel no such prepossession. It is sometimes hinted that amphitronic blandishments are found of avail in disposing critics to be favourable to books, and still more direct means of smoothing the aristarch's frown are said to be—though this we can scarcely believe—occasionally resorted to. Some critics there are also, who, having written without much success on certain subjects themselves, cannot be restrained from taking up snappishly all who venture into the same paths, and the more so if these new adventurers have met with some share of public approbation—much like an elderly lady who, disappointed in love herself, tends to be vixenish about all the tender affairs of her nieces. A too constant suavity, a too frequent asperity, are likewise faults of critics, as they are faults of men. Then there is the affectation of parading a little knowledge over and above what they have acquired from the book, by way of showing how well they are qualified for their task. Nor let us forget that saddest of all critical failings, as it is of all men in whom it occurs, the incapability of ever owning to an error: a reclamant author may point out the grossest misapprehensions of fact and meaning to a critic, but no true son of Aristarchus ever will admit but that he was quite right, and this he generally contrives to make good by the use of a little dexterity. There is, finally, a sort of traffic of complaisance in reviewing, which is highly injurious to the credit of criticism generally. It was held in especial detestation by the Rev. Robert Hall, who, being intreated to puff a friend's sermon, answered, "I must be excused; I have entirely done with reviewing; it is an occupation of all others I dislike. I have read the sermon with much pleasure; but I am well aware how extravagantly his friends at — have always overrated his talents; and were I to review and express myself in such terms only as the occasion would justify, I should mortify instead of gratifying. In truth, reviewing at the request of particular friends is a snare for the conscience. I never wished any person to review for me." Frequent exactions of this kind were made upon Mr Hall, who as frequently remonstrated against their unreasonableness. "Were such things determined by choice," he says, "it is my deliberate opinion I should prefer going out of the world by any tolerable mode of death rather than incur the necessity of writing such articles. I must therefore beg and intreat I may not be urged again upon a subject so ineffably repugnant to all the sentiments of my heart."

#### SKETCHES IN NATURAL HISTORY.

##### THE REIN-DEER.

THERE are few animals whose history has excited a greater degree of attention and interest than that of the rein-deer. This has arisen from obvious reasons. Perhaps no animal exists which is useful to a portion of mankind in so great a variety of ways. It is a remarkable anomaly to witness an entire people depending on this single quadruped for nearly everything they possess. Without it, extensive tracts of country would be altogether uninhabitable; while, by its means, a considerable nation is enabled not only to maintain their existence, but even to procure many of the comforts of life, according to the notions they entertain of enjoyment.

Keeping in view two or three varieties established in Canada and the countries to the north of it, the European rein-deer may be considered as the type or normal exemplar of the animal, and also by far the most interesting of them. It is not a handsome animal, compared with many others of the tribe to which it belongs. The form is robust, low, and heavy; the limbs short and stout; the hoofs broad, and deeply cleft; the neck is rather short, a formation rendered necessary by the weight of the antlers, which are often of large size, and the head is carried forward in a line but little inclined from that of the back. The males are always largest; the females, among the tame races, scarcely exceeding, at the shoulder, the height of the fallow-deer. Like most quadrupeds destined to inhabit a cold country, the rein-deer is clothed with hair of two different sorts, one short and close, the other longer, looser, and of a somewhat woolly appearance. It is longer under the throat, and in winter increases in length over the greater part of the body. In a wild state the colour is gray, but when domesticated, as with all animals in that condition, this rule is often departed from; and though gray continues to be the prevailing hue, there are very frequently white patches on the head, shoulders, and feet; it is generally by means of these markings that the Laplanders are best able to recognise their respective animals. Instances are frequent of rein-deer being entirely white, and also white with blue spots.

The female usually produces two fawns at a birth. The horns are then just visible, but in about two weeks they are an inch high. They exist both in the males and females, and are shed, those of the former in November, of the latter commonly in May. In large

males the horns are sometimes upwards of four feet long; in the other sex they are constantly smaller. They have a broad palmate projection not far from the base, then describe a curve, the upper part of which is directed forwards, and broadly palmate; the segments deeply divided. They constitute a powerful instrument of defence, for the animal has merely to turn its head downwards in order to present a formidable array of lengthened prongs to an assailant. It does not gore, like an ox, but defends itself by striking downwards, for which the curvature of the horns is best adapted.

The proper region of the rein-deer in Europe may be said to lie between the 60th degree of latitude and the northern extremity of the continent, including Spitzbergen and the other large islands of the Arctic ocean. The vicinity of the Arctic circle may be regarded as its metropolis or chief residence, where the peculiarities of its organisation and habits are best adapted to the physical conditions of the country. In regions where, during the greater part of the year, the surface of the earth is covered with a thick mantle of snow, and when the cold is so intense as to freeze spirits of wine, even when kept within an inhabited hut, and where the brief though warm summer affords a scanty vegetation—

Where tapering grows the gloomy fir,  
And the stunted juniper—  
Where the wolf and Arctic fox  
Prowl among the lonely rocks,  
And tardy suns to deserts drear  
Give days and nights of half a year—

in such regions the rein-deer finds a congenial place of abode, has all its powers and instincts most fully developed, and attains its highest degree of utility to man. In Lapland, it can scarcely be said to exist at all in a wild state, but herds of rein-deer are still found roaming at large in the forests of Dalecarlia.

From its structure, the rein-deer is much better fitted to be a beast of draught than of burden. The Laplanders, however, contrive to make it answer almost all purposes, including that of carrying burdens; and in northern Russia, the Jungusians are said to rear a large breed, which they chiefly use for riding. When thus loaded, the progress of the animal is comparatively slow, and its movements restrained. In order to witness its full powers, it must be seen yoked to the pulk or sledge, and driven by a Laplander. The strength, speed, and bottom it then displays are, as is well known, surprisingly great. The harness is extremely light, and in no way interferes with the free motion of the head and limbs. The deer is guided by a slender rein attached to the horns, and is urged forward either by the voice in a kind of halloo, or by a whip or goad. Securely wrapped in furs, with no portion of his body exposed except the face, and of that as little as possible, the traveller is strapped down in his little crib, like a child in a cradle, with only the arms and upper part of his body left free. When everything is ready, he touches the deer with his thigh, and off it starts at a rapid pace. If several start at the same time, they diverge a little from each other, each choosing his own path, as there is no beaten track to follow over the uniform expanse of snow, often smooth and hard as polished marble. Frequently does it happen, as they whirl along in their headlong career, that the pulk is thrown on its side, and the hapless inmate skims along the surface, or, if the snow be soft, plunges it up with his body in a wreath around him. Often, also, in descending a declivity, the sledge, owing to the momentum it has received, makes a sudden bound over a considerable space, sometimes becoming entangled in the traces, and overthrowing the deer. Commonly, however, such accidents are but little regarded; the damage, if any, is speedily repaired, and the rapid course resumed. Even a partly unfrozen river does not interrupt the Laplander's career. Urging his deer to the height of his speed, he makes it bound across the opening, even though it exceed seven feet in width, and the sledge follows, partly from the impetus it has received, and partly from the continued dragging of the animal. The dangers of this mode of travelling are considerable when the parties are overtaken with mist or snow-drift. The approach of the former the Laplander can foresee, when, to the inexperienced eye, everything around betokens clearness and serenity. A faint obscurity in a certain region of the sky is at first seen; this gradually enlarges, and soon overspreads the horizon; the land-marks, or the stars, which helped to guide the course, disappear; and commonly the snow-drift soon succeeds. If there be a party of several individuals, they would now speedily lose each other's company, were it not for the tinkling of the bells suspended from different parts of the harness. Should the journey be continued during a dense fog or snow-drift, it can only be at considerable risk, for the most experienced then cease to be certain of the localities, and there are instances of travellers having been dashed over precipices. From this danger they are often, in such circumstances, saved by the instinctive sagacity of the deer, which stops short before reaching the brink, even when, to all appearance, the latter cannot be seen through the gloom. If it be impracticable to proceed, the Laplander throws his kaftan over his head, lies down among the snow, and covers himself with it, patiently waiting for a favourable change.

The rate of speed at which the rein-deer can travel



in this manner, and the distances it can accomplish at a stretch, are variously stated, but always in such a way as to convey a high notion of its powers. A hundred and fifty miles have been travelled with one deer in twenty-four hours, and the same distance with three deer in thirteen hours. It is affirmed, that in a case of great emergency, a rein-deer, the portrait of which is preserved in the palace of Drottningholm, performed a distance of 124 Swedish, or 800 English miles, in forty-eight hours, and, after this almost incredible exertion, fell down and expired. An individual in good condition can easily trot ten miles in an hour, and perhaps gallop nearly double that distance in the same space of time; but that rate of speed cannot be kept up beyond the hour. In a comparative trial of speed, one deer performed 3089 feet 8 inches in two minutes, which is at the rate of 25 feet 8 inches in the second, and nearly nineteen miles in the hour. The Laplander affirms that a couple of good rein-deer enable him "to change his horizon three times in the twenty-four hours;" that is, they can travel three times the greatest distance they can see at starting, which, in clear weather in these latitudes, is computed at about a hundred miles.

Every Lapland family is possessed of rein-deer; few of them of a smaller number than fifty, many of several hundreds, and a few of upwards of a thousand. The latter number is regarded as constituting wealth, and the fortunate possessor is looked upon as having reached the height of good fortune, although he adds but little to his enjoyments beyond his neighbours, except perhaps in a more liberal allowance of brandy, of which the Laplanders are excessively fond. The tending and treatment of these herds form nearly the sole occupation of the Laplander. The female produces her young in the month of March, for some time after which she is generally milked twice a day; this, one of the most interesting scenes in the whole economy of the Laplanders, has been thus described:—"Towards evening the rein-deer are driven from the mountains to the tents. Their arrival is first announced by the barking of the dogs, who run round the herd to keep the animals together. Soon the whole herd is descered, forming a closely packed mass, which moves along like a gray cloud. As the animals approach nearer, the horns become a prominent object, resembling a moving leafless forest, and very various in their form and size. The fawns push through among the full-grown animals, and we at last hear a crackling noise, produced by the movement of their legs, and resembling the sound of burning fir-trees, or rather that of electric sparks. Here and there is heard a sound somewhat like the grunting of swine. Near the tents there is a circular enclosure, provided with two openings or doors. When the rein-deer approach it, they press closely together in order to enter, and one sees only the moving mass and the projecting horns. Should a deer or fawn remain behind, or take a wrong path, a dog immediately pursues it, and the deserter is soon seen running back to the herd at full pace, followed by the dog. The animals now stand closely packed together within the fence, and are so tame, that a stranger can touch them without trouble or danger. In the centre of the enclosure there is a small erection to which the animal is strongly bound during the milking, in order that it may not become unruly, and upset both the milk and the milker. The milking is performed by men, women, and children; but the task of bringing the animals to the milking place belongs exclusively to a particular man, and is accomplished in the following manner:—This individual is accurately acquainted with every animal, even in a herd of several hundred, and knows if it is a male or female, and if it is milked or not. He goes with a noose in his hand, and throws it so dexterously over the horns of the animal he wishes to secure, that he never fails in his aim, even at a distance of fifteen or twenty yards, and when many individuals are standing between him and his object. As soon as the noose is fastened round the horns, the animal is dragged to the milking place, and then securely tied; another animal is afterwards taken in the same way, and so on till all have been milked. The skill of the Laplanders in the use of this noose can only be compared to that of the savages of Africa, or the bull-takers in Brazil." From the milk thus obtained, which is of a rich quality, and by no means disagreeable flavour, resembling that of the ewe, an excellent kind of cheese is prepared, and what is not designed for immediate use is suspended from the roof of the huts in the dried stomachs of the deer.

During the summer months the Laplander, in the interior of the country, subsists almost entirely on rein-deer milk, which is frequently mixed with a kind of sorrel, and boiled (without being rendered deleterious) in an uncoated copper vessel. Another of his favourite articles of food is the stalk of the wood angelica (*angelica archangelica*), a common plant in our own country, which he eats raw, after removing the outer fibres. He never kills a rein-deer except in the autumn; as it is only in that season that the flesh is in good condition. One of the principal causes of the lean, almost emaciated, state of the deer in spring and early summer, is the attacks of a species of two-winged fly, the (*Etrus tarandi*), an insect of similar habits to the *C. Boris*, which infests the ox in this country, and produces the excrescences on the skin

called wurbles or wormalles. The matres of the rein-deer, in like manner, pierce the skin and deposit an egg under the cuticle, where the larva are hatched, and live in a little cist or cavity, feeding on the lymph generated by the continual irritation of the parts. The dread the deer manifest at the approach of this fly is excessive. Linnaeus says they cannot stand still a minute, no, not a moment, without changing their posture, starting, puffing, and blowing continually. Even though among a herd of perhaps five hundred rein-deer there might not have been above ten of these flies, yet every one of the herd was observed to trample, and kept pushing its neighbour about. They are likewise much annoyed by a kind of blood-sucking fly (*Tabanus tarandicus*), similar to the cleg and breeze-flies which are so troublesome to horses in this country. To avoid these enemies, and also the plague of gnats, which in many parts of Lapland, during the heat of summer, is perfectly intolerable both to man and beast, the herds are commonly removed towards the confines of Norway, where the longer continuance of the snow mitigates the evil. Other migrations are undertaken at different seasons, occasioned chiefly by the necessity of obtaining, by change of locality, a more abundant supply of food. Many writers have affirmed, that it is indispensably necessary that the rein-deer should be taken every year to the sea-coast, as the influence of the sea-water is supposed to be essential to their welfare. This, however, appears to be by no means the case, the sole cause of their repairing thither being quest of food. In search of this they are often conveyed to islands some distance from the shore, which is accomplished by tying one or two deer to the stern of the boat and dragging them along with it, when the whole herd follow. They swim with great facility, owing to the breadth of their feet, and are so buoyant, that a considerable part of the body is kept above water. Although no instinctive impulse seems to operate in leading rein-deer to the sea-coast, the fact is unquestionable, that they show a decided inclination to return to the interior of the country at a certain season; and if not driven in that direction before the end of August, they will take the first opportunity to depart of their own accord.

During the summer, they feed upon such herbage as they can obtain, and are particularly partial to the young shoots of the birch, willow, and some other shrubs. In winter, their chief subsistence consists of various kinds of lichens, and, above every other, of that kind named rein-deer moss, a plant which grows abundantly on barren moors throughout the greater part of the north of Europe. Its general height in this country is from two to three inches, but in Lapland it is said by Linnaeus to grow so luxuriantly as to be sometimes a foot high. To the rein-deer it is an unfailing resource; and even during a short halt in their lengthened and toilsome journeys, they are generally able to refresh themselves by a few mouthfuls, obtained by removing the snow with their broad hoofs, assisted at times with their horns. With a peculiar delicacy of sense, with which it seems to be gifted for the express purpose, the rein-deer at once detects the spot where the moss grows, even though under a deep covering of snow; and it has never been observed to remove the latter in search of food when lying upon a frozen lake, although to human observation there was nothing to indicate the existence of ice below. These animals have a singular inclination to feed on lemmings; and when these little creatures are migrating in countless hordes, no inconsiderable number fall victims to this unaccountable and seemingly unnatural propensity.

Various attempts, as might have been expected, have been made to introduce an animal of so much interest into this country, but they have been attended with very little success. The Duke of Athol set a number at large on his extensive Highland moors, but they speedily died out. Mr Bullock brought from Norway a herd of a hundred, accompanied by a Lapland family. These the writer of this remembers seeing exhibited in Edinburgh, and the deer then appeared to him to be in a drooping and sickly condition. Some of them were afterwards let loose among the Pentland Hills, a locality thought to be well adapted to them, and in certain parts of which we have seen their favourite lichen growing in some abundance; but these also died. One individual lived upwards of two years in the garden of the Zoological Society of London, and was fed almost entirely on dry provender. But no attempt hitherto made gives much encouragement to the hope that we shall succeed in naturalising the rein-deer. It is not very easy to account for this. It may be remarked, however, as a general fact, that animals indigenous to a northern climate have much more difficulty in accommodating themselves to a southern one than conversely; the conditions under which northern animals live are much more difficult to supply by artificial means than those necessary for the well-being of such as are natives of a warm climate. Hence the small number of Arctic animals found in our menageries, although it might be expected that the establishment of zoological gardens so far north as Edinburgh and Dublin would now afford facilities for their acclimation. It is probable that in the case of the rein-deer the difficulty of establishing it permanently in this country is partly owing to its migratory instinct, for which it cannot find scope within the narrow limits of our insular position. This instinct, we have heard it alleged, may wear off in the course of a few generations; but

if it be so strong in the first instance, that the want of an opportunity of gratifying it is injurious or fatal to the animal, it is not easy to see where these modified generations are to come from.

#### MY UNCLE'S DRESSING-GOWN.

WITH my earliest recollections of Uncle Watson, are associated an old blue dressing-gown, which he wore for many years, in spite of the dilapidated condition of the garment and the remonstrances of his friends.

My Uncle Watson had the reputation of being a little miserly in his disposition. I have no reason to say so; for he made myself and my sister a handsome present every birth-day. His enemies said he was poor; had that been the case, he could, on each occasion, have easily given us something less expensive, and retained enough to buy himself a new robe-de-chambre. Still, this opinion was somewhat corroborated, when I asked him one day why he did not provide himself with a new one? "Oh," he replied, "if I once begin, there is no knowing where such expenses will end." On looking around, I could not help thinking that a few pounds, laid out in furniture, would have increased the old gentleman's comfort. He lived in a small but pretty cottage in the suburbs of London; and one of the parlours was converted into a study, in which he mostly sat. The furniture was nearly as old as the dressing-gown. My uncle boasted that his carpet had been in wear ever since he occupied the house, which was nearly a quarter of a century, and, originally, he bought it second-hand. The pattern was only visible here and there, so variegated was it with darns and patches. His usual seat was an old bergère chair, which, when it came into his possession, was stuffed with horse hair; but the hair had gradually departed, leaving the seat as bare and bald as my uncle's head. His writing-desk could never be closed, in consequence of the bad condition of one of its hinges. His book-case had but one door; and most of his books were in worn-out bindings, or no bindings at all; the oval looking-glass had a crack in it, and a part of the window-curtain hung in an unintentional festoon, in consequence of the dropping of a nail; the footstool wanted a leg, and the fender a foot; in short, the scene of my uncle in his study was one of decay and dilapidation.

As if to render this eccentricity the more remarkable, my uncle at home and my uncle abroad seemed two different persons. Though he spent the most of his time with either a pen or a book in his hand, his habits were not unsocial. He often joined my father's quiet dinners. Had you seen him at such times, you would have imagined that, instead of having emerged from his forlorn sanctum, he had stepped out of a band-box. The nicest attention to the toilet was observable in every part of his attire. His spotless shoes were fastened by a broad buckle of the brightest silver; his silken hose were without a wrinkle; his nether garment without a speck. The double-breasted white waistcoat, and neatly crimped chitterlings, showed that his laundry was conducted by a skilful hand. The venerable respectability of his whole appearance was much increased by the queue which whitened the collar of his coat—for he stuck to hair-powder in spite of the tax. Then, the sprightly politeness of his manners contrasted strongly with his almost slothful ease when secluded in his study. He was a problem which no one could solve; many had their theories concerning him, but none appeared to be more absurd than my sister's: "Depend upon it," she would declare in the midst of a discussion on the subject—"depend upon it, 'tis all owing to that musty old dressing-gown!"

It is astonishing with what tenacity some persons (particularly women) will often cling to a particular idea, be it ever so extravagant and unreasonable. It was thus with my sister. With that total independence of received notions of cause and effect, she would insist that the broken furniture and careless domestic habits of Uncle Watson were owing entirely to the old wrapper; and, in the fulness of her wisdom, she one day bought a handsome new one, of that kind which are ticketed up in the drapers' shops as *schals de cashmere*. The pattern was a brown and green, and the whole affair was lined with a brilliant red silk, and made to fasten round the waist with a cord and tassel. When she exhibited it to us, we laughed outright at the monstrous expectation that Uncle Watson would ever wear such a thing. "Wait and see," said my sister; "there is no hurry. I do not expect to be able to effect my object all at once. If I get it over his threshold in three months, and upon his back in six, I shall be satisfied. You know the old one cannot last for ever; it will drop off some day soon, I am certain." There was no saying, after all—for when once they take anything into their heads, girls are surprisingly persevering.

She began her siege like a skilful general, by cautious approaches. At first she took up a distant position; she intreated my uncle to get his dressing-gown washed, well knowing it would fall to pieces in the operation. So much, however, had been said from first to last about the unfortunate piece of apparel, that the topic, like the subject of it, was a well-worn one; and my uncle showed that he was heartily tired of it, by a hint to my sister to mind her own flounces instead of—

"Of yours; eh, uncle?" she said, archly catching

\* Blom's *Konstgrick Norwegen statistisk beskriven*, translated in *Edin. New Phil. Jour.*, vol. xxxiv. p. 254.



up a rag which depended from the skirt. Upon this the old gentleman laughed heartily, and my sister, finding him in such a good humour, was thrown off her guard, and too rashly mentioned her purchase. Uncle Watson was angry; who, he should like to know, invited her to lay out her pocket-money—which was, in all conscience, little enough—for him? But he would punish her; he would not even look at it. "No no, child," he concluded; "this will last my time." My sister was much disappointed with this interview, and declared that it had put her schemes back at least a month. But this time she was mistaken.

My uncle's domestic establishment appeared completely unique to whoever had seen his aged house-keeper. This capacious lady had gone through quite as much service in her generation, and was as nearly worn out, as his dressing-gown. Mrs Muddle, who had—like her cap and her sable habiliments—seen better days, could not, by any arts of intreaty or interest, be brought over to my sister's side of the question. Long habit—that despot of the aged—bound her to the old dressing-gown as firmly as if on its existence, more than on that of her master, depended the tenure of her place; which, to all appearance, was by no means a bad one. Her reverence and respect for the unsightly garment was only second to that which she felt for the wearer. To have removed that object from her daily sight would have deranged her ideas, and "put her out" in the routine of her duties. She therefore gave a decided and uncompromising negative to being art or part in persuading my uncle to wear the new robe-de-chambre. "Still," said my sister, handing her the parcel about a week after the first failure, "there can be no objection to its remaining here for the present; for in the end, you know, Mrs Muddle, it may come in for a gown for you." The old lady was mollified, and locked it away with the groceries in the store-closet.

The day after this achievement Uncle Watson dined with us. As the time approached for his return, a violent storm began, and Mrs Muddle, with commendable foresight, placed his dressing-gown and slippers before the study fire. The storm raged more violently, and every now and then the careful body looked in to see if the wrapper was getting warm, and to place it nearer to the grate. At length my uncle's knock was heard. The moment he got admitted, he smelt a strong and unpleasant odour; it was something like a mixture of burnt cork and the steam of bad soup. "Something burning," he remarked. Alas, poor gentleman! had he known what was on fire, he would have expressed himself a little more strongly. He opened the door of his study; it was filled with smoke; he rushed to the fire-place, and there beheld his cherished dressing-gown smouldering gradually away; one skirt already consumed, and the left arm in imminent peril. My uncle promptly tore the treasured ruin from the chair, rolled it up in the hearth-rug, and having completely extinguished the fire, stood straggling with sorrow; as if he yearned to perform—like Mark Antony with the mantle of Cæsar—a funeral oration over the rags.

It is not on record whether my uncle slept that night. I rather think, by his haggard appearance next morning, that he had not. At all events he was considerably more gay in outward appearance than in inward spirits, for conceive my astonishment to find him, when I called, bedizened in the flaming new dressing-gown! I could scarcely believe my eyes, so completely were they dazzled by the brown, green, and crimson. I shook the old gentleman's hand in hearty congratulation, and expressed how delighted my sister would be with her triumph. But my uncle did not appear grateful for the present; he cast a rueful glance at his faded slippers; and well he might, for they were a bad match to the new dressing-gown.

It became evident, after a few days' wear, that the splendid garment did not increase my uncle's comfort. While writing, he could not, as heretofore, wipe his pen on the cuff—a great deprivation and check of his free-will. The taking a pinch of snuff, also, became a far more elaborate process than heretofore; he dreaded lest any should fall on the silk facings. While inducing himself into his uneasy chair, he felt it incumbent on him to draw the skirts aside, lest he should crease them. Neither, as was his former wont, could he with propriety dust the edges of a book, on removing it from the shelves, with the skirt; nor use them to give the last touch of polish to his silver shoe-buckles. In short, my uncle in the new dressing-gown exhibited all the symptoms of one of the finny tribe when it is withdrawn from its native element.

In spite of all this, Uncle Watson became his new dress amazingly. Age had been kind to him; he still possessed a tall upright figure; his thinned, whitened locks, and the pleasing gravity of his features, completely softened the haunting appearance of the tri-coloured robe. He put me in mind, when arrayed in it, of such a fine old nobleman as they show on the stage in the breakfast scenes of a sentimental comedy. Nor was the effect quite lost upon him; for I remarked, on more than one occasion, that he looked in the cracked glass.

The news of my uncle's change of habits spread like wildfire, and he was for some weeks besieged with visits professedly to him, while in reality they were calls on his new dressing-gown. His only

sitting and reception room being the study, he began to feel a little ashamed of its furniture; and one day, when my wicked sister had brought some friends to exhibit my uncle in his fancy-dress, he actually consulted her about the pattern of a new carpet. She told him to leave it to her. He consented; and in four-and-twenty hours the floor of "that house" was adorned with a beautiful Brussels, which turned out an admirable match to the dressing-gown; for it exhibited its three identical colours to a shade. "Change," saith the poet, "begetteth change," and this completed the revolution. Old-fashioned worn-out rickety tables and chairs standing upon a beautiful new carpet, showed like patches upon the face of Venus, or Gobelins tapestries in a broker's shop. My uncle could not endure the discrepancy. Besides, the carpet felt so soft to his feet (for the wafer-like thinness of his old slippers rendered his understandings extremely sensitive), that he was constantly reminded, by a parity of reasoning, of the hardness of his seat; so that the next time we visited him, a luxurious fauteuil stood in the place of the shabby bergère. My uncle, however, made a stout stand at the table. He tried repairs; but the hopeless piece of goods was past them; the new glue tore open the old joints; and one morning, on my uncle coming down to breakfast, he found his favourite piece of furniture strewn the flowery expanse of carpet with detached boards, like a timber-yard after a high wind. Upon this my uncle fell into a furious, reckless state of despair. He sent for an upholsterer, gave him a carte-blanche, and, dreading to face the effects of his rashness, rushed into the country; but not before the bewildered Mrs Muddle had given him legal warning to quit.

Though it is only a twelvemonth ago that my uncle returned to his renovated domicile, yet you would be astonished at the alteration which has taken place in the whole of his habits, mental as well as external. Call at any time, and you will find him precisely the same man he used only to be in company—cheerful and chatty. The manner in which he now lives has proved to the world that he is neither a miser nor a misanthrope. That he is not poor has been evidenced towards my dear sister in a most agreeable manner. She had long been engaged to a schoolfellow of mine, a worthy person, whom circumstances had prevented from marrying. Uncle Watson, knowing this, bought the other day a small estate, on which he has granted her a life-tenure, on condition that she does feudal service, by annually presenting him with a new dressing-gown. The end of my story is, that she was married last week; the whole string of events being, she still reiterates, entirely owing to that "musty old dressing-gown."

#### THE ORGAN AND WHITE-MICE BOYS OF LONDON.

THE number of poor Savoyard and Italian boys who are found loitering in the streets of London and other large towns, endeavouring, as they best can, to excite compassion and charity, cannot but surprise the most casual observer. The obvious way of accounting for so large an influx of foreign children to perform the part of mendicants, would be distress in the lands of their birth, for how else should they leave the sunny regions of the south for the less genial clime to which they have wandered? But such a theory is only a structure of the imagination. The organ and white-mice boys, as they are generally called, are not paupers on their own account; they are merely so many convenient instruments for exciting voluntary contributions from the compassionate—a certain class always ready to impart a trifle on the score of feeling, without any deliberate consideration of the consequences. In a word, the Savoyard and Italian boys are part of a mechanism of alms-extortion, and, as such, must be viewed as so much animate stock in the hands of the great capitalists, who employ them for their own advantage. Seeing that capital is always ready to be embarked on every undertaking which promises a return, no matter what it be, need it excite in us any wonder that a portion of it should be adapted to an engine for playing upon the easily-excitable feelings of Englishmen? Not but that we have seen organ and white-mice boys in France, where they are as much a curiosity as in England. In that country, however, capital has not attained the degree of exuberance required for importing and employing boys on the large scale on which the trade is conducted in England; and we, moreover, imagine that the French, with all their taste for the fine arts, are not such ready encouragers of these poor wandering minstrels and showmen as the tender-hearted inhabitants of our own island.

But let us see what is the *mécanisme* of the great feudatories who import these poor boys for this kind of vassalage. The mode of proceeding is usually this:—Each of these traffickers in children employs agents in various parts of Italy and Savoy, whose business it is to induce parents, by the temptation of a small premium, to engage their sons in a species of

apprenticeship for a certain term of years; the agents agreeing that the children shall be clothed and fed, and at the end of the stipulated period, sent back to their native country. The word *apprenticeship* would import that something was to be learned, but what learning there can be in the art of turning the handle of an organ, is not easily seen; it reminds one of the sage advice given to Goldsmith by the schoolmaster, that if he wished to follow a genteel profession, he should, by all means, bind himself for seven years to turn a cutler's wheel. The profession of the organ boys may, in this view of the matter, be remarkably genteel, but it would not appear to possess any other brilliant recommendation. The truth is, the contract of apprenticeship is never fulfilled. On arriving in London, the unfortunate young strangers are received into a crowded den in one of the back streets of Whitechapel, Drury Lane, or Westminster, to be herded with a host of other victims. Every morning they are sent into the streets to excite the pity of the public—some with white-mice, some with barrel piano-fortes, others with organs, and not a few with dressed monkeys. The repositories of these objects, one would fancy, must be of a very odd description, and, viewed as property, be worth considerable sums. Each piano-forte—a portable thing, resembling a small bookcase carried in front of the person—cannot cost less than from eight to ten pounds; yet some proprietors send out daily from ten to twenty of them, besides as many organs equally valuable. For the use of any one object of attraction, a certain sum is exigible per day—an organ, for example, being charged four or five shillings, while a few white-mice may be rated at sixpence. Whatever be the sums laid down by this cruel tariff, their payment is enforced with relentless avarice; and we have heard it stated, that whatever the wanderers collect short of the allotted sum, it is stopped out of their food. Frequently, these poor boys may be seen in the streets at late hours of the night begging piteously; because, having been unable to collect the stipulated sum, they dread chastisement from their hard-hearted employers. When their services cease to be profitable, they are sometimes turned adrift to shift for themselves. Thus thrown upon the world, they are ready for any other craft of a migratory order. Some find their way to the large provincial towns, where organ and white-mice capitalists conduct business on a small scale. Others probably become vendors of plaster casts of "images," either on their own account or that of the fabricators of such articles. Humble as is this peripatetic employment, let it not be passed by with anything like a sneer. We have always esteemed the image boys as serving a useful purpose in our semi-rude state of society. Disseminating objects of taste, no matter how inferior in execution or material, these poor foreigners may be said to impart the first sentiment of love for the tasteful and beautiful in the homes of our artisans and peasantry.

It is not, however, of the possible benefit which society may in this or any other way derive from the vagrant mission of the Italian boys which we have now to speak. Our object is to attract the attention of benevolent Englishmen to the wretched condition, morally and intellectually, in which they are generally found in their head-quarters, the metropolis. Without abating the claims of native poor, surely something ought to be done towards their melioration. It is neither safe nor creditable to allow them to grow up in heathen ignorance in the midst of a great city. Already a step has been taken in this good cause. A school for the instruction of poor Italian boys, we are glad to learn, has been established in Hatton Garden. The efforts which have set this infant establishment on foot deserve encouragement, and we proceed to give an account of it, derived from the report of a correspondent.

When the projectors of this school first commenced their arrangements, between two and three hundred pupils presented themselves to be instructed; but in the course of a few weeks, many of their masters forbade their attendance, and the number was reduced to between eighty and ninety, consisting of adults as well as children. They are taught English history, writing, and such branches of drawing as are available for mechanical trades. At the last examination, which took place on the 10th of November, some of the pupils showed great proficiency in these branches of knowledge. It appears, from the manuscript report which has been forwarded to us, that the expenses of the establishment do not exceed two pounds per week; yet the funds are in a languishing condition. The teachers, much to their credit, act gratuitously. The benevolent exertions of the individuals who have set this scheme on foot, deserve the highest meed of praise; and nothing but good will result from their labours.

Yet, not even for a probable good, should the present wicked system of importing Italian boys be permitted to continue. We believe the law cannot well suppress the practice, so long as it is conducted under colour of legal apprenticeship; perhaps the most effective check would consist in the Sardinian and Italian governments taking upon themselves the duty of enlightening the deluded parents upon the



real condition to which their offspring will be reduced when sent to wander over the streets of our large towns. Something might also be done by our own police to put a stop to the practice, which is becoming too clamant to be much longer disregarded.

#### SUMMER LOITERINGS IN FRANCE.

##### BLOIS.

OUR descent of the Loire from Orleans was for a time brought to a close at Blois, after a pleasant voyage of five hours, the small steamer having been considerably assisted by the current, and would require double the length of time for its return. Blois, on whose beach we were now landed, occupies one of the most picturesque situations adjoining or within a considerable distance of the river. On the face and summit of two conspicuous mounts, commanding a splendid outlook over the Loire and the sunny south, and in the hollow between these rising grounds, the town has sprung up, a creation of unquiet times. In the present day, the streets, narrow and irregular, remain much what they were centuries ago; but, as at Orleans, a spirit of improvement has broken out among the authorities, and the town has been faced towards the river with a row of well-built private mansions and hotels, which overlook an open thoroughfare and line of quay.

The external aspect of Blois has likewise been benefited by the erection over the Loire of a spacious stone bridge of eleven arches, with a neat obelisk rising from its centre. Near the quays, at the extremity of the bridge, another object, still more attractive, is an avenue of lofty trees shadowing an agreeable promenade, the resort of all classes of inhabitants who feel inclined to loiter out of doors. Such spots, however, are common in France, and Blois is no way remarkable for this or any other of its places of public resort.

Towering above river, promenade, and town, the most conspicuous objects of all are the ancient castle of Blois, situated on the western, and the cathedral on the eastern knoll. To ascend to these, first by badly paved alleys, and afterwards by flights of steps, is a duty incumbent on every tourist, for they are numbered among the most interesting objects on the Loire. In our own case, this was done with somewhat less than the usual hurry; for, induced by the kindness of a friend, an English resident, who had much to tell and show us, we remained several days in the town and its neighbourhood. Let me take the reader along with us on our first visit of curiosity to the old castle, or palace, as perhaps it should more properly be entitled.

After scrambling up various steep lanes and stairs, we arrive at an open esplanade, having the massive buildings of the chateau on its western side, the whole, as it seems, springing out of the precipitous sides of the rock on which it had many centuries ago been planted. Entering the portal under the charge of a female concierge, we are ushered through the front building into an irregular but large court environed with edifices in different styles of different eras, and in different states of preservation. What a scene of fallen grandeur! On our left, and consequently from the back overlooking the south, is the more ancient and least ornamental part of the structure, supposed to have been built by Louis XI. In our front is an unfinished structure in the Grecian style, now used as a barrack, and at whose windows may be pictured sundry soldiers furnishing their accoutrements. On our right is a building worth all the rest, the portion reared by Francis I., in that highly ornamental style of architecture known in France as that of the *renaissance*. This renaissance one never hears a word of in England, and it is only on getting pretty well into the heart of France that it comes prominently into notice, and always in connection with François Premier, a contemporary of our Henry VIII., and whose taste for the magnificent, as well as his encouragement of learning, have shed a lasting glory round his memory, notwithstanding many serious defects of character. The renaissance style of architecture may be classed with the modern Italian, but is more light and ornamental; windows, doors, chimney-tops, and other prominent parts, being largely embellished with sculpture, and otherwise tastefully disposed. The pile which we have now come to visit, both in front and in the lofty overhanging rear, is of this graceful order, but greatly damaged by revolutionary violence and neglect. The whole is in the present day empty, silent, and desolate, though still covered from the weather, and, till lately, employed as lodgings for common soldiers. Francis the illustrious died in 1547, and before the palace he had erected at Blois was half a century old, it became the scene of a tragedy as reckless and bloody as that which took place in the palace of Holyrood at nearly the same era. Blois was in these times one of the principal royal residences in France, and here Henry III., along with his queen-mother, Catherine de Medici, held court in the autumn of 1588. Henry was weak and cowardly, his mother bold, audacious,

and cruel. Impelled by the demoniac passions of this virago, the king resolved to take vengeance on Henry Guise, Duke of Lorraine, usually styled *La Balafré* (the scarred), and whose popularity as a military leader threatened, as was supposed, the stability of the monarchy. At first the king was desirous of bringing the duke to open trial, but it being represented that the issue of this would be doubtful, he consented that he should be privately despatched. The brave Crillon refused to take upon himself the execution of this dishonourable plan; it was therefore intrusted to Lagnac, first chamberlain of the king, and captain of forty-five Gascon noblemen of the new royal guard. According to one account, the king distributed forty-five daggers among these attendants, giving them at the same time directions for their use. Another account states that nine of the more resolute were selected at the recommendation of their captain to accomplish the bloody deed. It is at least certain, that a number of these armed assassins were placed in the king's cabinet, immediately in front of the tapestry which covered the doorway, with injunctions to fall upon and stab their hapless victim as soon as he attempted to enter, in obedience to a message from his majesty. The duke, who had come to Blois with his brother the cardinal, was warned of a plot maturing against him, and advised to fly; these friendly hints, however, he would not listen to, and resolved to abide the worst that might happen. While still agitated with doubts as to his safety, a courteous message was delivered from his royal master, requesting an interview. He obeyed the summons. Having ascended the grand staircase, and entered the outer hall of the king's apartments, he felt some dismay at seeing the door shut, and in charge of a double guard. He preserved, nevertheless, a calm exterior, and saluted the bystanders as usual; but when about to enter the cabinet, and in the act of drawing aside the tapestry, he was stabbed with several daggers, and before he could draw his sword, he fell dead on the floor, exclaiming, "God have mercy on me." This event occurred on the 23d of December 1588; and on the following day the cardinal de Lorraine was similarly assassinated in another part of the palace. It is mentioned as a further instance of the mean and sanguinary disposition of the king, that after the murder of La Balafré, when the body lay stretched out with a mock cross of straw on the breast, he came to view the remains of his victim, which he kicked on the face with his foot, exclaiming, "Je ne le croyais pas aussi grand!"—I did not think he was so great. With the death of the Duke of Lorraine and his brother perished the last heads of the powerful family of Guise. Yet the double murder brought no peace to royalty. The church, the sorbonne, and several of the principal cities, declared against him, and his assassination was openly preached. His end was at hand. He was stabbed, August 1, 1589, in the camp of St Cloud, by a raving fanatic, and died next day. With him terminated the house of Valois, and Henry of Navarre, the first of the Bourbons—the great Henry Quatre of French history—reigned in his stead.

With the recollection of such dismal transactions, but also remembering that the chateau of Blois was for centuries the scene of many a gay spectacle, we enter the deserted edifice, commencing with the great hall once used for the assembly of the Estates. This large apartment, which measures about a hundred feet in length by sixty in breadth and as many in height, appears to be a relic of a more ancient structure included in the restorations of Francis. Its lofty and dark wooden roof is supported by pointed arches on pillars springing in the present day from a damp and cold earthen floor—the place of military exercise, apparently, when the weather will not permit a parade out of doors. Not a vestige of furniture is seen in this once magnificent hall; and containing nothing to excite interest, we ascend the staircase in front, leading to the floors formerly occupied by Henry III. and his mother. The stair, which is of stone, and of the spiral form, is finely sculptured, and affords an entrance at each landing to a suite of melancholy apartments. Those which interested us most were the ante-chamber and cabinet where the hapless Balafré received his death wounds. They remain as they had been left by royalty, but empty and gloomy, the extraordinary thickness of the walls giving the appearance of a prison. In a few of the apartments some defaced panneling remains, and behind one of the pieces which was movable, our conductress pointed out the blocked-up entrance to a private passage. Having gone over the building from garret to cellar, and peered into all sorts of curious nooks, we were led to the top of an isolated turret, which commanded a noble prospect of the country to the south, east, and west, with the Loire wending its serpentine course through it. This turret, which may have been designed originally as a watch-tower of the castle, and closely overhangs the town below, was, at the period to which the preceding details refer, used by Catherine de Medici in her superstitious appeals to the starry world. To this observatory did she retire with her astrologer, the instruments of whose vain science were placed on a stone elevation, which still exists. Pointing to the inscription *Uranie Sacrum*, which she assured us was not French, the aged chateaine shook her head with a mysterious intelligence of what such wonderful words imported—a

communication received by us with highly becoming gravity. And so ended our first visit to the castle of Blois.

I have mentioned that the principal other object conspicuous from the river is the ancient cathedral; this, however, though interesting in its way, excited in us neither admiration nor awe. Like a great many other public buildings in France, it was undergoing considerable repairs at the time of our visit. A place more apropos to the ordinary run of my inquiries was the town-jail—strictly speaking, the prison for the department, Loire and Cher, of which Blois is the chief *lieu*. My visit to this house of care was on Sunday, and a beautiful Sunday it was; only so much cloud as ornamented a lovely sky of azure blue, and with a sun which sent its bright rays down into the narrowest alleys and most secluded nooks of Blois. I had been attending the church service in the house of an English clergyman, who, during a short stay in the place, kindly undertook to execute his sacred office for the benefit of the few families of his countrymen who had taken up their residence in Blois. I need scarcely say that the privilege of being allowed to form one of this small flock in the wilderness, was accepted with much gratefulness, and will not soon be obliterated from my remembrance. On dismissal of the little party, the obliging friend to whom I have already alluded inquired whether I should feel inclined to do an act of Christian charity in visiting two unfortunate young Englishmen who were at present in confinement in the town prison. "By all means, I'll go; but what are they in confinement for?—debt, I suppose?" "No, much worse than debt, although our countrymen here have earned no good reputation on that score neither; they are in prison on a charge of highway robbery." "What an extraordinary thing—tell me all about it." And so, while we slowly climbed the steep stairs of Blois, on our way to the *maison de détention*, in the upper part of the town, my conductor related the following particulars:—

"The two lads we are going to visit are, I believe, natives of London, at least they were there put by their respective parents—people in decent circumstances—to businesses suitable to their station; one was a haberdasher's apprentice, the other a clerk in a merchant's house in the city. In these, or like situations, they might, as a matter of course, have pursued an honourable and useful career; but possessed with the demon of adventure and mischief, both it seems abandoned their employments, took with them what little money they could raise on the score of wages, and fled no one knew whither. This occurred about the commencement of the present year, and the first intelligence of the two young scapegraces was their being brought as criminals to the prison of Blois here, in the heart of France, under the charge of gens-d'armes. From all I can learn, it appears that these two lads had their heads turned by perusing a certain novel of bad notoriety, and seeing the dramatic performance which glorifies the deeds of its hero. With apparently the insane idea of imitating the character of that personage in real life, they each purchased a pair of pistols, powder, and shot, procured passports in false names, representing themselves as brothers, and set out for France in quest of adventure. To make the thing still more absurd, they could not speak a word of French; but no matter; here, in this country, the worst of all for such tricks, did these two London apprentices bold arrive, with the view of levying war on their own account on the public highway. It appears that, having spent all their money in Paris, they pushed on towards this part of the kingdom in order to commence operations. Stopping a Toulouse carrier on the road, they pointed their pistols at him, and held out their hands for his money. The poor man, in an agony of fright, pulled forth and gave them a purse containing fifty francs. This was either more than they expected, or, desiring possibly to emulate the generosity of the old highwaymen, whom they had read of, they considerably returned half the money. Need I add, that almost in no time the pair were captured in a most unromantic way by a mounted gendarme, for these personages are always scouring about on horseback, and cannot well be eluded, particularly by foreigners. The booty and loaded pistols being found upon them, their case was very serious, and the crime has been ultimately aggravated by the discovery that they had passports in false names, an offence of itself punishable with two years' imprisonment." "And they have been here since their capture?" said I, not a little amazed with the story. "Yes, they have been detained here for trial a more than usually long time; for the carrier on whom the robbery was committed lives at a considerable distance, and would rather avoid appearing in evidence on the case; however, he will be compelled to appear, and the trial is finally arranged to take place about ten days hence."

The latter part of this singular narration was told while we sat for a few moments in the apartment of the jailer, waiting for the appearance of the two unfortunate beings who had thus come into a situation so perilous and deplorable for themselves, so distressing to their parents and connexions. And how sad was the spectacle they exhibited; two youths, respectively seventeen and nineteen years of age, dressed in the blue linen blouses of the French peasantry, and in charge

of a French turnkey. During the short conversation which was permitted to us, I learned that the particulars previously communicated to me were substantially correct, though it was with great shame and reluctance they owned the folly which had led them to be guilty of so gross a violation of duty. I may here add, by way of concluding a relation almost too strange for belief, that at the trial of these youths, which shortly after occurred, and greatly from the benevolent exertions of the gentleman who had accompanied me on the above occasion, they were treated with a leniency upon which they had little reason to calculate; the youngest, as far as I recollect, being condemned to eighteen months, and the elder to two years' detention in one of the large provincial prisons of France.

The prison of Blois consists of several structures, with courtyards, one department being for men, and the other for women. The prisoners are obliged to work, but they are permitted to associate and talk to each other while in the courtyards, with little distinction as to tried and untried, and the system, therefore, on general grounds, is no way commendable. I was much pleased, however, with the department for female prisoners, who are all under the exclusive charge of *sœurs de charité*, one acting as principal, and others as subordinate attendants. What a spirit of goodness is manifested in the sacrifices of these pious women! Here, secluded within a gloomy mansion, and associated with the worst of their sex, do they devote their lives freely and gratuitously to a work of charity and mercy—watching like sentinels night and day over their sleeping or waking protégés, instructing the ignorant, cheering the despondent, buying themselves in the meanest offices, all with the exalted consideration, that they are performing a sacred duty, and winning souls to God. Nor is the task apparently disagreeable, or performed as a penance. One never sees anything but cheerfulness in the faces of these women.

The sisters of charity are perhaps the widest spread religious sisterhood in the world. No difficulties daunt them. They confine themselves to no country. Their services are given to all without regard to creed. I learned, while in France, that a certain number of them had offered to an English gentleman to proceed to New Zealand, if he thought they could be of any use there in attending upon the sick, or otherwise helping the unfortunate. In France, they may be seen in every prison for females, and also in every infant school. At Blois, they are of great use in superintending a large establishment situated on the south side of the Loire, and combining the character of a workhouse, hospital, and infants' asylum. I of course visited this institution; and, as a stranger seeking information, was received with the blandest courtesy by the good Madame Mère, who hastened to show me all worth looking at. My attention was chiefly directed to the *salle d'asile*, or infant school. This branch of the establishment is on a comprehensive footing, for here are received early in the morning, and kept the whole day, all the poor children of Blois, whose parents cannot give them the necessary attention—a kind of day-hospital, to keep children from wandering idly abroad, and acquiring bad habits in the streets. Little boys and girls, to the number of about two hundred, were playing in a courtyard when I approached, and being summoned by a whistle of Madame their teacher, a young sister of charity, they instantly assembled and marched in double files to their places, their feet keeping time to the measured chant of their schoolmistress. The evolutions, lessons, and instructions, both on the floor and gallery, were, to all appearance, formed on Mr Wilderspin's plan, and therefore not new to me, and need not be particularly described. The exercises had, to my mind, only one fault—too much the air of military manoeuvres; but I suppose without this the school would not meet with the encouragement which is necessary for its success. It is, at any rate, needless to fret about such an evil, which will doubtless be abated as the nation tranquillises and attains permanent stability.

During our residence at Blois, we spent part of a day in visiting Chambord, a place of so great interest that no tourist thinks of passing it. Chambord, which is situated about twelve miles from Blois, in a southeasterly direction, in the midst of a woodland scene, is one of the largest palaces in the world—a kind of Versailles, but in a state of desertion approaching to ruin. Built in the most magnificent style of the renaissance, by François Premier in 1526, its numerous ornamental turrets, chimneys, and other projections, present a highly striking picture to the eye—a forest of architectural beauties. We wandered through this vast pile, which numbers nearly four hundred and fifty apartments, and found all desolate, and generally defaced by revolutionary violence. The most remarkable object in the place is a staircase in the principal tower. This marvel of art consists of two spiral stairs, one winding within, or rather along with, the other, in a manner resembling the double thread of a screw. Being partly prehensile, open at the sides, and lavishly sculptured, a more beautiful or interesting work of the kind cannot be imagined. I should say it would not be mispent time for a young architect to travel a hundred miles to see this curious relic of the renaissance. At present the palace and grounds

are the private property of the Duke of Bourdeaux. As the neighbourhood is low and unhealthy, and as no ordinary fortune could maintain a fitting establishment in a house of such enormous size, we must look upon Chambord as nothing more than a monument of useless splendour, and, we may almost say, of royal folly.

#### THE HUNTER OF "THE FAR WEST."

THE following animated sketch is from Oliver's "Eight Months in Illinois," a small volume which we have already recommended to the perusal of our readers:—

The hunter is always poor, and in some measure despised by his more industrious neighbours; and when a man once acquires a habit of wandering in the pathless wilderness in search of game, it takes such hold of him, that he very rarely shakes it off; indeed, the occupation requires a vigilance so absorbing, as speedily to characterize his whole manner. The old hunter's eye is never at rest; meet him where you will, in the forest or within the walls of a house, and whilst he is conversing with you, his eye will be wandering slowly and intently from object to object; and if on his feet, he will be constantly shifting his position, and, with his head and shoulders depressed with habitual caution, will repeatedly sweep the entire circle of vision.

The real hunter is the pioneer of American civilisation. He is the first to dispute the possession of the wilderness with the red man and with the wild denizens of the forest, and in some measure, like them, is intolerant of the near approach of a population bringing with it the trammels and interruptions of civilised institutions. The sound of the axe in the woods is hateful to him; and no sooner does the smoke of the settler's fire become frequent in his neighbourhood, than, packing up his scanty movables, and placing them in a vehicle of most primitive construction, he, with his family, seeks a more congenial home in those solitudes where nature still holds undisputed sway. He buys no land, nor asks any one's leave to build his hut or till his little corn-patch. Let not the inhabitant of the crowded city think, that in doing this the hunter makes any great sacrifice; he is merely giving way to the impulse of habit, and choosing what is most agreeable to his tastes. He was born in solitude. No busy hum of men—no "sound of church-going bell" ever saluted his young ears. All his feelings, all his reasonings, are influenced by the loneliness in which they were conceived. His associations are not tinged with the busy crowds and homes of cities, but with the still solitudes of the primeval forest. He has not learned to philosophise on the ebb and flows in the destinies of congregated millions; but he has wandered and mused on the banks of some levithan river, rolling its waters along, whither he knows not, whence he cannot tell—a dream, a mystery.

Your true hunter is often a simple-minded, unaffected child of nature; true, he is ignorant, but this ignorance includes the follies and very many of the vices of civilised life. The worst example of his tribe is he who has not fled before the influx of population, and who, impatient of the restraints of industrious habits, has generally reaped nothing from civilisation beyond its vices and its scorn.

The hunter of the West generally follows his occupation on horseback; and a more picturesque turn-out, or one more in keeping with the accompanying scenery, is not often to be met with. He generally wears a broad-brimmed palm-leaf hat, covering a profusion of hair, which flows over his neck and shoulders. His face, tanned by exposure to all weathers, is often garnished by a beard, untouched by razor or scissors for many weeks; and his throat, unless the weather is severe, is unfettered by a neckcloth. His capot, made from a Mackinaw blanket, generally blue or pale green, has the broad gray border fantastically arranged about the cuffs, neck, and between the shoulders; whilst his capacious trousers, of home-made janes, have their nether extremities stuffed into the tops of his long-legged boots, made somewhere down east. Slung over his shoulder is a bullet-pouch made of leather, or of the furred skin of some wild animal, ornamented with sundry tags and fringes, accompanied by a powder-flask made of a fine horn, and polished so thin, that the grains of powder can be seen through it; a charge or powder measure, made of horn or bone, with an attempt at carving upon it, and often with the initials of the owner's name, and a tomahawk with its head enclosed in a leathern case. In the front part of the belt which sustains the last-mentioned articles is a sheath containing a large knife. The other shoulder is occupied by a heavy rifle, with a barrel of fifty inches long, stocked forward to the muzzle, and mounted with brass. The butt, in some instances, ornamented and inlaid with silver, is hollowed out into a crescent shape at the extremity, so as to sit securely on the arm, and thus to act as a counterpoise to the leverage of the muzzle. The horse, like its rider, is "unkempt, unshorn," with flowing mane and tail, caparisoned with a double-reined bridle with Spanish bit, heavy, and plated with brass, and a Spanish saddle with heavy brass stirrups; a blanket being folded for a saddle-cloth.

Riding leisurely along the outskirts of the prairie-view grove, he is seen to stop at a point commanding a glimpse of some sweeping vista embayed in the dark woods, like an arm of the sea, with many winding channels of green among the bosky islands of hazel, sumac, and cassafras. Long and patiently he stands searching the openings with his practised eye, to catch a glimpse of the browsing deer. If, after waiting a considerable time, he sees no game, he moves to some other point; but if he should happen to see a deer, he slips from his horse, and, by taking advantage of any inequality of the ground, or of intervening bushes, and by keeping the game between him and the wind, tries to get within shooting distance, and is generally pretty secure of his object at one hundred and twenty or one hundred and thirty paces, if his rifle is not of very small calibre. Should the deer run

off, the western hunter rarely attempts a running shot; but should he succeed in killing his deer, and not be desirous of procuring any more, he goes for his horse, which is broken to stand for hours where it is left, and, having pulled the deer before him, takes it home. If the deer be too heavy for him, or he wish to continue his hunt, he cuts a forked sapling with his tomahawk, strips it of its top and branches, and having bound the hind-legs together, slips them into the fork, and raises the carcass against a tree, to a height sufficient to secure it from dogs and beasts of prey; or, adopting another method, he climbs up a slender tree, and bending its top to the ground, secures the deer to it, not too near the top, by the hind-legs, when he lets go, and the elasticity of the tree raises the slaughtered game to the height required. At his leisure, he returns with a small light sled or cart, and conveys the fruits of his hunt to his primitive dwelling.

#### MR LOVE ON THE WORKING-CLASSES.

[We copy the following particulars respecting the condition and tendencies of at least a section of the working-classes in Manchester, from a pamphlet lately written by Mr Benjamin Love, an ingenious young bookbinder of that town.]

THE labouring population know little about saving—their habits are foreign from this practice. What they earn they usually spend. Referring to the number of accounts of each class of depositors at the savings-bank in the great town of Manchester, we find that, of the accounts remaining open in November 1842, the combined ranks of milliners, dressmakers and needle-women, shoemakers, tailors, hatters, cotton-spinners, weavers, silk-spinners and weavers, calico-printers, bleachers, dyers, packers, makers up, engravers, pattern-designers, mechanics and handicraftsmen, bookbinders, letterpress-printers, bricklayers, masons, joiners, coach-makers, cabinet-makers, cab and omnibus drivers, and mail-guards, and their assistants and wives, furnished only 4181. The total number of open accounts (excepting friendly societies, &c.) was 14,937. This statement shows that the saving propensities of a very large class of the labouring population of Manchester are of very stunted growth.

All good housekeepers are aware that it is of little consequence what the weekly earnings of a family be, if those earnings are not expended with due regard to economy. The following table of labourers employed in a cotton manufactory, showing their earnings and their present circumstances, proves this:—

Occupation.	Average own earnings per week when in work.	Average family earnings per week when in work.	No. of years in such earnings.	Present circumstances, or circumstances in which he died.
Carder and Manager,	£ 1 15 0	£ 3 0 0	10	Extremely poor.
Carder,	1 10 0	3 0 0	7	In great poverty.
Dresser,	1 10 0	3 10 0	10	In poverty.
Male Spinner,	1 5 0	1 15 0	5	In poverty.
Male Spinner,	1 5 0	1 15 0	5	In poverty.
Spinner and Manager,	2 0 0	2 10 0	12	Died in great poverty.
Mechanic at Factory,	1 5 0	2 5 0	7	In poverty.
Overlooker,	1 5 0	3 10 0	7	In poverty.

The gentleman who favoured us with this table has permitted his foreman to accompany it with particulars relating to each individual. In these, extravagance, improvidence, want of domestic management, paying 20 to 30 per cent. above market price for provisions, owing to the necessity of buying from small shopkeepers, intemperance, immorality, are alluded to as the causes of the state of those whose circumstances are represented to be those of poverty. While we admit that these causes are selected, we cannot help thinking that there are few masters who could not furnish similar statements.

It is not unusual for the week's earnings of many operatives to be consumed in luxury and drunkenness on the evening of Saturday and on Sunday. The consequence is, their families drag out the remainder of the week amidst privations extending even to the common necessities of life. To obtain food, an article of furniture or of dress is taken to the pawnbroker, and a few shillings are borrowed on its security. This money has to be so minutely subdivided, that domestic articles are necessarily purchased in almost the smallest possible quantities; consequently, 30 and even 60 per cent. are not unfrequently paid over and above the prices for which these articles might have been procured.

Improvidence is by no means confined to the labouring population of the manufacturing districts. A friend informs us that a similar social evil prevails amongst the fishermen on the coast of Yorkshire. Three men and a boy have been known to take in one night, under favourable circumstances, fish, which they sold the following morning for £20. Instead of carefully husbanding their respective shares of this sum, they with their families immediately resorted to over-feeding and drinking; and, between waste and extravagance, contrived to spend every farthing of the money before the end of the week.

Where such improvidence prevails, home soon presents no attraction for its inmates. Within its walls mutual recriminations are chiefly heard. Destitute of comfort, it is shunned. The beer-house, the gin-shop, debating clubs, infidel meeting-houses, or seditious assemblies, are the places frequented in its stead. And such homes, be it remembered, are the nurseries of the rising generation; such the seminaries for domestic training! What effect would any system of national education have on children returning from schools to homes like these? No matter how excellent the seed sown in the juvenile



mind, if, the moment it begins to shoot, it have to encounter an atmosphere so pestilential. It must wither and die. It would scarcely be too much to say, that in the homes of England's labourers exist the causes, either positively or negatively, of national immorality and crime; and if so, either must the remedial efforts of the philanthropist be directed.

#### THE PESTILENCE OF BAGDAD.

[The following account of the condition of Bagdad, the ancient seat of the caliphs, is given by Mr Fraser in his "Travels in Kurdistan," and offers one of the most striking pictures ever presented of an Eastern town under the infliction of war, pestilence, inundation, and famine. The account refers to the year 1830-1, during the pashalik of Baoud, whom the sultan resolved to supplant in his government.]

DAOOD (proceeds Mr Fraser) had long applied himself to the formation of an efficient army, and had succeeded so well, that he might have laughed to scorn all the military array which the sultan could have sent against him. Thus stood matters when, in the commencement of 1831, the plague, which had been desolating Persia, made its appearance in Bagdad. Insulated cases had occurred, it was said, so early as the preceding November, but they were concealed or neglected; and it was not until the month of March 1831, that the fatal truth of the plague being in, and increasing in Bagdad, became notorious and undeniable.

On the last day of March, Colonel Taylor shut up his house, in accordance with the painful but necessary custom of Europeans, who find, by experience, that if this precaution be taken in time, they generally escape the malady, which appears to be communicable only by contact, or close approach to *leeward* of an infected person. On such occasions, all articles from *windward* are received through wickets cut in the wall, and are never touched till passed through water. Meat, vegetables, money, all undergo this purifying process, and letters or papers are received by a long pair of iron tongs, and fumigated before being touched by the hand. Well were it for the natives of the country if they could be prevailed upon to submit to the same measures of precaution; the disease would then be robbed of half its terrors, and its victims greatly reduced in numbers; but indolence and indifference, combined with a dim belief in predestination, prevent them from effectual exertions; although the fact, that thousands fly from the city in hopes of escaping the pestilence which had penetrated into their dwellings, proves indisputably that their faith in fatalism is by no means firm or complete.

In some cases this flight was made in time, and the fugitives escaped, though too often only to perish at another period and in another place. In others, they carried the disease along with them, spreading its poison, and dying miserably in the desert. Even all the care observed by Europeans has sometimes been insufficient to preserve them from contagion. The virus is so subtle, that the smallest possible contact suffices for communicating it, and the smallest animal serves to convey it. Cats, mice, and rats are, for this reason, dangerous inmates or visitors; and cats in particular, as being more familiar with man, become more dreaded, and consequently are destroyed whenever they are seen by those who have faith in the value of seclusion. An instance of the fatal consequence of contact with such animals occurred in the house of a native Christian attached to the British residency, who had the good sense to follow the resident's example in shutting up his house on a former occasion. A cat belonging to the family was touched by his eldest child, a girl of fourteen or fifteen. The animal had either been abroad itself, or had received the visit of a neighbour, for the contact brought the plague: the child took it, and died of it. Poor thing! from the first moment she was aware of her danger and fate.

It was probably by some such casual means that the disease was brought into Colonel Taylor's house, although he and all its inmates conceived it to be almost hermetically sealed from its approaches. On the 10th of April a Sepoy died of it, and four of his servants were attacked. By this time the disease had made such progress, that seven thousand persons had died of it in the eastern half of the city, which contains the residence of the pasha, the British mission, and all the principal inhabitants. From the other side the accounts were not less disastrous, and the distress of the inhabitants was further aggravated by the rise of the waters of the Tigris, which, having burst or overleaped the dams made upon its banks higher up, had inundated the low country to the westward, and even entered the town, where two thousand houses were already said to have been destroyed. Many who would have fled, were prevented from doing so, not only by this spread of the waters, but by the Arabs, who had now congregated around the city, and who robbed and stripped naked all who came out of it.

Thus pent up, the pestilence had full play, and the people fell beneath it with incredible rapidity; and Colonel Taylor, finding his own house infected, had nothing left but to use the means in his power of flying, while a possibility remained of so doing. His own boats, in which he and his family had come from Bassora, remained always moored beneath the walls of the Residency, and in a state of readiness for immediate service. In these he resolved to embark; and one great advantage was, that being in a manner confined to the precincts of the Residency, and so much raised by the heightened waters that the deck of the yacht was on a level with the postern-door of the house, its inmates could make their preparations and get on board without being subjected to any foreign intercourse whatever. Matters being thus arranged, Colonel Taylor invited the Reverend Mr Groves, a missionary, with his family, to accompany his party to Bassora, where, in a house in the country, sanguine hopes were entertained that they might avoid the contagion.

Mr Groves, however, on mature deliberation, declined availing himself of Colonel Taylor's offer. The reverend gentleman had undertaken the care of a certain number of young persons, the children of Christian families of

Bagdad; and motives of duty prevented him from taking a step which appeared to him like a desertion of his duty. He resolved to remain at his post; and putting his trust in that Almighty Power which had sent the dreadful affliction, and who, he well knew, could save as well as destroy, he shut up his house, in which were twelve persons, including an Armenian schoolmaster and his family, and calmly awaited the issue. It is from this gentleman's journal that the best accounts of this dreadful period are to be collected; and from it, therefore, so far as the plague and inundation are concerned, I shall take the liberty of quoting occasionally in the following short account of the condition of Bagdad.

Colonel Taylor left Bagdad on the 12th of April. On the previous day, the number of deaths was understood to amount to twelve hundred, and on that day it was ascertained that one thousand and forty deaths had actually taken place on the east side of the river alone. Next day, Mr Groves had the pain of becoming aware that the disease had entered the house of his next-door neighbour, where thirty persons had congregated, as if for the very purpose of supplying it with victims. That same day, the report of deaths varied from one thousand to fifteen hundred, and that exclusive of the multitudes who died beyond the walls. On the succeeding day, the deaths increased to eighteen hundred; and so terrified were the survivors, that they scarcely could be prevailed on to stay and bury their dead. Many prepared for the fate they anticipated, by providing winding-sheets for themselves and family before the increased demand should consume the whole supply. Water also became scarce; for every water-carrier, when stopped, replied that he was taking his load to wash the body of some dead person. [Washing the body being considered an indispensable funeral rite in Mohammedan countries.]

For several days together about this time, that is, from the 16th to 20th or 21st of April, the mortality, so far as could be known, remained stationary at about two thousand a day; but many singularly distressing cases of individual distress occurred. In the family of one of Mr Groves's little pupils, consisting of six persons, four were ill with the plague—the father and mother, a son and a daughter, leaving but one son and a daughter untouched. Of the pasha's regiments of seven hundred men each, some had already lost five hundred; and the report from the neighbourhood was still worse than in town. The water, too, in the swollen river was fast increasing, and the danger of a total inundation became every day more imminent.

On the 23d, a little girl of twelve years old was seen passing by with an infant in her arms; and on being asked whose it was, she said she did not know; she had found it on the road, and heard that its parents were dead. This was a very common effort of charity, especially on the part of the females, and not unfrequently proved fatal to them. An Armenian woman, who had come to beg for some sugar for an infant thus found, mentioned that a neighbour of hers had in the same manner rescued two, which she discovered thus abandoned in the street. Both these infants died, and were followed by their charitable protectress. Of all the painful incidents that attended the benevolent expeditions which Mr Groves occasionally made from home, the sight of the number of infants thus exposed was the most distressing. [After mentioning a few more details equally harrowing, Mr Fraser goes on to the 25th of the month.]

On the 25th, the fall of a wall in the Residency, from the sapping of the water, induced Mr Groves again to visit that place. Not a soul did he meet in the streets, except those who carried dead bodies, and persons infected with the pestilence. One of the principal sellers of cotton for burying-clothes (who had taken advantage of the times to raise his prices exorbitantly) this day died himself. There was then no more of the stuff in the city. The price of rope, too, had become quadruple. Instead of formal burial, the bodies even of persons of considerable wealth were now just laid across the back of a mule or ass, and taken to a hole, attended, perhaps, by a single servant. Mr Groves mentions the gesticulations of the few Arab women whom he met in the way as particularly striking; they seemed to demand of heaven why Franks and infidels like him were suffered to live, while so many of the faithful died. The effect upon his mind was peculiarly startling and painful; surrounded as he was by the dead and the dying, the growling of the dogs that were mangle the bodies (scarcely waiting till life was fled to begin their horrid feast), united with the cries of the exposed miserable infants, formed a scene of horror which he avers—and no wonder—can never be erased from his memory.

The mortality meantime increased. On the 26th, it was affirmed at the serai that the deaths had reached five thousand in one day!—there seems no doubt that they exceeded four thousand, and this out of a population which at that time did not exceed fifty or sixty thousand; for at least one-third of the late inhabitants had, first and last, quitted the city. The water, too, had risen frightfully, and the anticipations in case of its breaking into the city were terrible. Dreadful as they were, however, they were more than realised on the two following days. That night a large portion of the wall fell, and the water rushed in full tide into the city. The quarter of the Jews was speedily inundated, and two hundred houses fell at once. A part also of the wall of the citadel fell; nor was there much hope that any house or wall which the water had reached could stand, owing to the very dissolvable nature of the cement with which the greater part was built. By the following night the whole lower part of the city was under water; and seven thousand houses are said to have fallen at one crash, burying the sick, the dying, and the dead, with those still in health, all in one common grave.

The difficulty of obtaining provisions had now become extreme. Very respectable persons would now present themselves at the door to beg for some of the commonest necessities. The number of the dead, too, left in the streets, had increased to a frightful degree; nor was there a possibility of removing them. This extremity of distress was shared to the full by the ruler of the smitten

city. The serai of the pasha was by this time like the dwellings of most of his subjects—a heap of ruins, where he himself remained in the utmost terror and perplexity. He declared to a servant of Mr Groves that he knew not where to sleep in safety. He dreaded every night being buried in the ruins of the remaining portion of his dwelling. He sent to request the resident's remaining boat, that he might fly from the place; but of its crew, only one man was to be found alive; and even the pasha could not procure men to man her. "Fear of him is passed," says Mr Groves, "and love for him there is none." Even in his own palace he was without power; death had been fall as busy there as elsewhere; and that authority which was absolute in times of mere human agency, had shrunk into nothing before the effects of an Almighty mandate. Out of one hundred Georgians that were about him, four only remained alive. All that could be done was to throw the dead out of the windows into the river, that they might not shock or infect the living. The stables of the palace, like the palace itself, fell in pieces, and all the pasha's beautiful horses were running wild about the streets, where they were caught by any one who could, and most of them were sold to the Arabs.

During this frightful mortality around, the home prospects of Mr Groves and his family, although they had hitherto been providentially exempted from actual disease, were sufficiently gloomy and distressing. From the little passage opposite, they had seen twenty-five bodies carried out, and they knew of several persons being ill. In one of the houses, which had contained eight inmates, only one remained alive; and in like manner of another household of thirteen, but one solitary individual survived. Nor were these by any means uncommon or singular cases. Of eighteen servants and epeyas left by Colonel Taylor in charge of the Residency, by the end of the month only four remained, and of these two were affected, and afterwards died. There were five teachers of Arabic and Armenian connected with Mr Groves's establishment, and every one of these died. Nor, with all this continued mortality, did the virulence of the disease abate, nor the number of daily deaths decrease. The remaining population, crowded into smaller and smaller compass by the increasing inundation, presented, as it were, a more sure and deadly aim to the shafts of the pestilence. The influx of new inhabitants into infected houses supplied fresh objects, and their dead remained poisoning the air in all the courtyards and areas, and literally encumbered the streets.

Nor was this fearful destruction of human life confined to the city. A large caravan for Damascus had left Bagdad at the commencement of the mortality; but it carried the deadly contagion along with it, and met, moreover, with an enemy scarcely less destructive in the inundation. They gained a comparatively elevated spot, where they remained pent up for three weeks, the water constantly gaining on them, and their numbers daily thinning. In the same manner a caravan of two thousand persons, who left Bagdad for Hamadan, in Persia, carried their pestilence along with them, and lost more than half their number on the road. [The plague lasted till about the beginning of May, when clear weather set in, and on the 26th of that month it had disappeared. Melancholy was the scene to the survivors.] Of all the buildings of Bagdad, there remained standing but a small knot upon the banks of the river, where the ground was highest, with a mosque or two, the walls and foundations of which had been more securely built than those of the others; and even of those that did remain, scarce one had escaped damage. Even after the waters had subsided, houses continued to fall from the effect produced upon the materials, and from the sinking of the ground. Of the long lines of bazaars, many had shared the general wreck, and long it was before those that remained began to fill, and shops to open in any numbers. Most of the merchants, and almost all the artificers, were dead. Even now, if you require some article of manufacture for which the place was formerly celebrated, the answer is, "Ah! you can't get that now, for all those who made it are dead of the plague." Whole trades were swept away, and it was some time before the common necessities of life, food and clothing, were to be had for the surviving population.

**Glow-Worm.**—The light of the glow-worm, one of the staple commodities of descriptive poets and sentimental naturalists, has lately been investigated by M. Matteucci, who has addressed a notice to the Academy of Sciences containing the results of his experiments. When submitted to chemical tests, the phenomena constituting the phosphorescence of this insect are found to be strictly analogous to those manifested by several luminous plants, many marine animalcules, and all decaying animal matter, as every individual must have witnessed in fish at a certain stage of decomposition. If placed in carbonic acid or hydrogen gas, the phosphorescent matter of the glow-worm ceases to shine after a space of thirty or forty minutes. In oxygen gas (the most powerful supporter of combustion), the light is more brilliant than in atmospheric air, and it remains brilliant for nearly triple the length of time. When it shines in the air, or in oxygen gas, it consumes a portion of oxygen, which is replaced by a corresponding volume of carbonic acid; but when there is an impossibility of light being emitted, there is no oxygen absorbed, and no carbonic acid emitted. Heat augments to a certain extent the brilliancy of the phosphorescent matter, whereas cold produces the opposite effect; and when the heat is too great the substance is altered. The same thing takes place when it is left in the air, or in some gases for a certain time, that is, when the substance is separated from the animal. The matter so altered is no longer capable of emitting light or of becoming luminous. From these facts, M. Matteucci concludes that the phosphorescence of the glow-worm is a phenomenon of combustion—the result of the combination of the oxygen of the air with carbon, which is one of the principal elements of the phosphorescent matter.



## Weekly Chat.

**Measuring a man by his height in feet and inches, by his weight, by his rank, and by his purse, are quite common. He is also sometimes, though less frequently, measured by his intellect and his moral qualities.** Leigh Hunt, following out the idea of Bacon, that "a man is but what he knoweth," has uttered the happy thought of measuring men by their amount of consciousness. "A man has no proof of his existence but in his consciousness of it, and the return of that consciousness after sleep. He is, therefore, in amount of existence, only so much as his consciousness, his thoughts, and his feelings amount to. The more he knows, the more he exists; and the pleasanter his knowledge, the happier his exertion. One man in this sense of things—and it is a sense proved beyond a doubt (except with those merry philosophers of antiquity who doubted their very consciousness, nay, doubted doubt itself)—is infinitely little compared with another man. If we could see his mind, we should see a pigmy; and it would be stuck perhaps into a pint of beer, or scent-bottle, or a bottle of wine, as the monkey stuck Gulliver into the marrow bone. Another man's mind would show larger; another larger still; till at length we should see minds of all shapes and sizes, from a microscopic one up to that of a giant or demigod, or a spirit that filled the visible world. Milton's would be like that of his own archangel: 'His stature reached the sky.' Shakespeare's would stretch from the midst of us into the regions of 'airy nothing,' and bring us new creations of his own making. Bacon's would be lost into the next ages. Many a 'great man's' would become invisible; and many a little one suddenly astonish us with the overshadowing of its greatness."

**Shipwrecks.**—It appears from official statements in 1841-2, that there is an annual loss of 611 ships, averaging 130,000 tons, which, at the rate of £20 per ton of value, gives a yearly loss of property to the amount of £2,600,000. The average loss of lives amounts to 1560, exclusive of the loss of passengers, convicts, &c. A yearly loss of 2500 lives from the shipwreck of British vessels would be considered a fair average. It has been ascertained, beyond the possibility of doubt, that the greater proportion of these shipwrecks and losses of life occur from the unworthiness of the vessels and the incompetency of their commanders. Neither as respects ships, nor shipmasters and their mates, is there any proper system of examination. The law, as it at present stands, could not prevent a ship from being commanded by the greatest blockhead or drunkard it could be possible to select. We are glad to learn that there is a prospect of this state of things being remedied, by the establishment of authorised boards of examiners.

**Chemical Aspirations.**—"It would certainly be esteemed," says Professor Liebig, "one of the greatest discoveries of the age, if any one could succeed in condensing coal gas into a white, dry, solid, and odourless substance, portable, and capable of being placed upon a candlestick, and burned in a lamp. Wax, tallow, and oil, are combustible gases in a solid or fluid form, which offer many advantages for lighting, not performed by gas; they furnish, in well-constructed lamps, as much light, without requiring the expensive apparatus necessary for the combustion of gas, and they are generally more economical."—"The idea of converting common coal gas into a solid inodorous substance, is certainly one of the highest flights of chemical ambition; but considering what the science has achieved within the last thirty years, we have no right to regard the attempt as a mere visionary speculation. Under the power of the chemist, almost every known substance can be rendered solid, fluid, or gaseous at pleasure; and when we consider that most of our combustible gases are obtained from liquids and solids by mere increase of temperature, and, moreover, that under sufficient pressure carbonic acid gas can be reduced to a liquid, and thence to a solid state, it is absolutely certain that coal gas is capable of being reduced to liquid and solid forms. The conversions of carbonic acid gas, it is well known, are attended with extreme danger, so may those of common coal gas; but once let the problem be solved, and the value of the discovery appreciated, and the ingenuity which solved the former difficulty will speedily avert the latter."

**Chalk-bearing Polypes.**—M. Decaisne, an eminent French botanist, has lately come to the conclusion that certain marine productions supposed to be animals, and called by naturalists "chalk-bearing polypes," are, in reality, sea-weeds. This view has been microscopically and chemically confirmed by M. Payen, who, in comparing the supposed animals, *Corallina officinalis* and *Halymeda officinalis*, with the true vegetables, *Chara hispida*, vulgaris, and translucent, observed, that the mineral secretions agreed in their situation, and in proportion dependent on the powers of these living beings; and discovered in the tissue of the coralline, when freed from mineral matter, a composition similar to cellulose, the principal constituent of vegetable membrane. After having dissolved from the coralline the mineral matter, by dilute hydrochloric acid, and then got rid of the excess of acid

by ammonia, the whole, after being well washed in water, was placed between glasses and submitted to the microscope. On the addition of tincture of iodine and sulphuric acid, the usual results were afforded which are characteristic of vegetable tissues, and even granules of starch were shown to exist by the former re-agent, proving, without doubt, that the corallines above named are not polypes, but algae, and that they belong therefore to the vegetable instead of the animal kingdom.

**Curious Etymology.**—When one visits Paris, he will observe over the doors of certain shops the word *relîure*, which he will soon discover means *bookbinding*. The appearance of this word caused us at first a few minutes' reflection. What was its etymology? What had relîure to do with the binding of books? A little examination disclosed that relîure comes from the same root as the word *religion*, and that, in fact, both terms almost mean the same thing etymologically. Religion is compounded from two Latin roots, *re*, again, and *ligo*, to bind, and may be considered as meaning to be bound again, or rebound; thereby importing that the religiously disposed have thrown off certain rude and natural habits, and bound themselves to lead a new and better life. Who could have imagined that the signboard term *relîure* had any connection with religion? The study of etymology, however, makes us acquainted with many such relationships.

**Tribute to Worth.**—The following just eulogy on the Society of Friends has met our eye in a small work by Mr Gwyder, entitled *Acquisitiveness: its Uses and Abuses*. "If I wished to point to a model where wealth seems to have been accumulated for the sole purpose of doing good, I would hold up to admiration the people called Quakers. They are wealthy almost to a man; and where, throughout Christendom, in its varied ramifications, there is a body of people who have done so much good, and with so much disinterestedness? not choosing their own connection as the sole recipients of their bounty, but extending it to every shade of religious creed. In the proper and legitimate uses of wealth, I present this people as a model worthy of general imitation. The late venerated Richard Reynolds, of Bristol, who had amassed a princely fortune in the iron trade, looked upon himself merely as the steward of the Almighty. His entire income, after deducting the moderate expenses of his family, was devoted to benevolence; and he thought his round of duty still incomplete, unless he devoted his time likewise. He deprived himself of slumber to watch beside the bed of sickness and pain, and to administer consolation to the heart bruised with affliction. On one occasion he wrote to a friend in London, requesting to know what object of charity remained, stating that he had not spent the whole of his income. His friend informed him of a number of persons confined in prison for small debts. He paid the whole, and swept the miserable mansion of its distressed tenants. Most of his donations were enclosed in blank covers, bearing the modest signature of 'A Friend.' A lady once applied to him in behalf of an orphan, saying, 'When he is old enough, I will teach him to name and thank his benefactor.' 'Nay,' replied the good man, 'thou art wrong. We do not thank the clouds for rain. Teach him to look higher, and to thank Him who giveth both the clouds and the rain. My talent is the meanness of all talents—a little sordid dust; but as the man in the parable was accountable for his one talent, so am I accountable to the great Lord of all.'"

**The amount of carbonic acid expired by man in twenty-four hours** has often been the subject of investigation among philosophers. From a paragraph in the Medical Times, we learn that M. E. A. Schalling, after careful experiment, arrives at the following conclusions. 1st, Man expires variable quantities of carbonic acid at different periods of the day; 2d, Everything being otherwise equal, man burns more carbon when his appetite is satisfied than when fasting, and more when awake than when asleep; 3d, Men expire more carbonic acid than women—children burn proportionally more carbon than men; and, 4th, In case of illness or fainting, the quantity of carbonic acid expired is less than in the healthy state. M. Dumas states that he burns rather more than one hundred and sixty-six grains of carbon in the four-and-twenty hours.

**The quantity of soap consumed by a nation**, says Liebig, in his Familiar Letters on Chemistry, would be no inaccurate measure whereby to estimate its wealth and civilisation. Of two countries, with an equal amount of population, the wealthiest and most highly civilised will consume the greatest weight of soap. This consumption does not subserve sensual gratification, nor depend upon fashion, but upon the feeling of the beauty, comfort, and welfare attendant upon cleanliness; and a regard to this feeling is coincident with wealth and civilisation. The rich in the middle ages concealed a want of cleanliness in their clothes and persons under a profusion of costly scents and essences, whilst they were more luxurious in eating and drinking, in apparel and horses. With us a want of cleanliness is equivalent to unsupportable misery and misfortune.

**The affinity of vegetables for moisture** is one of the most striking phenomena in natural history. "There is nothing more unaccountable," says a correspondent of the *Gardener's Chronicle*, "than the fact of certain plants terming with moisture, and growing to a large size, in places where no other vegetable can withstand the burning temperature. In the deserts of the East, in Arabia, and those extensive plains where nothing save sand is seen on the ground; where the heat reflected from the earth dissipates the passing cloud, which hastens, as it were, to shed its refreshing moisture on a more grateful spot; where no water ever rises from a spring, or falls from on high, and where the burning soil is intolerable to the foot even of the camel, the water-melon attains the size of a foot and more in diameter, and while all around is parched, offers in its cold and copious juice a draught to the traveller, which has often saved him from a lingering and painful death. In a similar, though less efficient manner, the melon cactus refreshes the wild herds of the Pampas; and the formidable prickles are not a sure guard against the powerful kick of the wild horse, who has no other mode of getting at its interior, but who is often permanently lamed in this extraordinary contest."

## ODE TO HOPE.

[BY DR JOHN MASON GOOD.]

O GENTLE Hope! whose lovely form  
The plunging sea-boy, 'midst the storm,  
Sees beckoning from the strand,  
If yet thy smile can chase the sighs  
From love and adverse fate which rise,  
O view this lifted hand!

Through dire despair's tremendous shade,  
Supported by thy secret aid,  
The troubled spirit flies.  
Thy sight sustains his drooping powers,  
Thy finger points to brighter hours,  
And clears the distant skies.

Then haste thee, Hope, and o'er my head,  
While yet impetuous tempests spread,  
Obtrude thy magic form:  
O give me, ere gay youth decline,  
To view the fair Zelinda mine,  
And I'll despise the storm.

## CHAMBERS'S EDINBURGH JOURNAL.

## ALTERATION OF SIZE.

THROUGHOUT the twelve years' existence of CHAMBERS'S EDINBURGH JOURNAL, its large size has been the subject of constant complaint, which has increased latterly in force, as the inconvenience of such bulky volumes in a library was more and more felt. We long resisted the demand for a change, from a dislike to give the least disturbance to the arrangements of a publication, which in the existing form had experienced so singular and unvarying a prosperity. At length, however, when on the point of completing the twelfth volume, we have concluded that this disinclination on our part ought not any longer to stand in the way of the general wish of our readers. The public is therefore respectfully informed that the number published on Saturday the 6th of January 1844, will be in the royal 8vo. size, being the 1st of a New Series, or the 623d of the whole work. By this alteration the Journal will in future range with CHAMBERS'S INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE, CYCLOPEDIA OF ENGLISH LITERATURE, and PEOPLE'S EDITIONS.

As the object of this change is simply what has been stated—a mere matter of convenience, deemed likely to be agreeable to our readers, and for that reason possibly favourable to the interests of the work—we hardly feel called upon to make a single further remark on the present occasion. It may only be proper to say, that the Journal, in its new size, will contain precisely the same quantity of matter as formerly, that every other arrangement connected with the work remains unchanged, and that we contemplate carrying it on with, if possible, increased zeal and assiduity, as a miscellany of instructive and entertaining reading for all classes, and as an instrument for promoting the great cause of popular education.

CHAMBERS'S EDINBURGH JOURNAL will continue to be published at 1d., or supplied in monthly parts neatly done up in a printed wrapper. In future, the volume will be completed at the end of every year. The work is sold by every bookseller in the United Kingdom and Colonies, to whom the publishers would feel obliged by orders for the New Series being forwarded as early as convenient.

For the twelfth volume of the Journal, now completed, an Index and Title-page have, as usual, been prepared, and may be had at the price of a number. To satisfy a frequent demand, the editors have likewise prepared a General Index for the Journal, from volume I. to XII. inclusive. This, as it is to be hoped, useful auxiliary, in searching for articles in the work, consists of two sheets, which may be bound at the end of the present volume.

W. AND R. CHAMBERS.

EDINBURGH, December 2, 1843.

## END OF THE TWELFTH VOLUME.



# GENERAL INDEX

## CHAMBERS'S EDINBURGH JOURNAL.

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{2} In the foregoing Index, which does not include small and unimportant paragraphs, many of the articles are entered under different heads, in order to facilitate their discovery.

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